

# War — Psychological Skills for Coping with Traumatic Events: Helping Ukraine

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**Abstract:** *The beginning of a full-scale invasion of Russian troops into Ukraine became a traumatic event of a powerful force for all the population of Ukraine. In the face of cruel military aggression, the need to develop a comprehensive approach to maintaining, preserving and restoring the psychological health of different segments of the population is becoming increasingly urgent. Day after day is increasing the need for competent and timely psychological intervention in the preparation of people for numerous trials. The problem of increasing the social and adaptive capabilities of a person, which involves the development of psychologically sound and empirically proven interventions that would restore the psychological health of the victims due to prolonged traumatization and has interfered with further complications. This paper examines and shows how war has changed people's life, routine and psychological first aid. The article emphasizes that the solution to problems with psycho-trauma lies not only in the development of the social protection system in Ukraine, a network of institutions that take care of mental health issues, and the training of specialists in methods of diagnosis and psycho-correction but also in work in society to change entrenched stereotypes. People need to know more about psychological trauma, post-traumatic syndrome, and ways to provide first aid because, unfortunately, psycho-trauma is a part of life, especially nowadays. The research deeply highlights the social and emotional effects of psycho trauma and aims to develop a comprehensive approach to preserving and restoring the psychological health of the individual who has suffered from prolonged hostilities and their consequences. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to solve the following tasks: to develop theoretical and methodological foundations of technologies for the restoration of psychological health of personality; to investigate the technologies of social and psychological rehabilitation of participants of hostilities, internally displaced persons, and the population of Ukraine, which was affected as a result of military aggression of the Russian Federation; identify ways of mobilizing personality resources that ensure the effectiveness of social and psychological rehabilitation.*

**Keywords:** *Psychometric measurements; tests; determination of the level and dynamics of development; markers and components.*

**How to cite:** Rybinska, Y., Antonivska, M., Serbova, O., Mykolaenko, M., Frolova, O., & Kolpakchy, O. (2023). War — Psychological Skills for Coping with Traumatic Events: Helping Ukraine. *BRAIN. Broad Research in Artificial Intelligence and Neuroscience*, 14(4), 88-104. <https://doi.org/10.18662/brain/14.1/408>

## Introduction

*"This war, even after it ends with our victory,  
will "play" on the psyche for at least the next 7-10 years.  
If we shorten this period or alleviate the consequences,  
it will be another great victory that we have to win"*

*Olena Zelenska, First Lady of Ukraine*

Unfortunately, emergencies are part of our daily lives. Various tragic events are taking place in the world: wars, natural disasters, accidents, fires, and interpersonal violence. Individuals, families, and entire communities can be displaced. People lose their homes and loved ones, find themselves separated from their families and familiar surroundings, or witness violence, destruction, and death.

Recently, the number of various conflicts and disasters has been increasing in the world, which undoubtedly has a huge impact on a person health and psyche. The American psychologist R. Emmons (Erichsen, 1867) defines modernity as the "century of trauma" since trauma and suffering are traced when describing almost every unpleasant event.

According to researchers' estimates, for example, in the USA, 60% of people experience at least, one such event throughout life, and 17% of men and 13% of women experience three or more traumatic events (Friedman, 2016). Of course, in the "hot spots" of the globe, the frequency of such events is much higher – in countries such as Algeria, Cambodia, and Iraq, it is estimated at 92%. Ukrainian statistics today are also extremely high because one can only imagine how many events of a "massively traumatic nature" have occurred in the history of Ukraine at least in the last century, and the psychosocial traumas caused by them: famine, war, repressions, Chornobyl, Maidan, armed conflicts, population displacement, but the Russian-Ukrainian war is now the most important stress factor.

Today, the society of our country and the whole world are faced with an unprecedented case of audacity, brutality, and ruthlessness in modern history – a full-scale war on the territory of a peaceful country, which is the center of Europe. Ukraine is experiencing a complex socio-economic and political situation, complicated by the ongoing conflict in Donbas, military events that began on February 24, 2022, a total blackout, migration does not stop, families have lost loved ones, housing - tens of thousands of people were forced to move to other countries or safer regions. Now, the situation has become even more complicated due to an

almost total blackout throughout the country which is the result of the critical infrastructure bombing by Russian missiles.

Military events in Ukraine have become a stress, an important psycho-traumatic factor that severely affects the health of the population: living in a war zone, direct participation in military events, battles, bodily injuries; loss of relatives, housing and work; the uncertainty of the situation with the impossibility of predicting one's future and the future of one's family.

Post-traumatic stress disorder is a ticking time bomb that will inevitably manifest itself in months and years - it will hit the entire country, the nation, because men and women from 18 to 60 years of age are fighting in Ukraine, that is, combat-capable, reproductive parts of the country's population, children, youth, ordinary people who are not directly involved in hostilities also feel the effects of war on their mental health.

*"Every day, the number of people who will experience consequences for their mental health will increase. Even those who were able to withstand the first months of the war will suffer mental exhaustion because getting used to being in a constant war can also harm mental health. According to our preliminary forecasts at the moment of the war, about 15 million Ukrainians will need psychological support in the future, of which about 3-4 million will need to be prescribed medical treatment,"* said Minister of Health Viktor Liashko, presenting the results of the express audit of services for the mental health care provided by state authorities (Liashko, 2022).

If we talk about international studies, according to the data of the World Health Organization, every fifth person living in a zone of military conflicts has problems with mental health. However, for 9% of the population, these consequences will be at the level of moderate or severe disease.

The vast majority of people in modern society are under the stress influence. The time in which we live increases the mental activity of people. This is due to the need to assimilate and process a large amount of information. That is why the problem of emotional stress arises, that is, tension and overstrain of the body's physiological systems under the influence of emotional factors.

In the face of war and the long-term constant threat of terrorism, the Ukrainian people feel extremely intense emotions. Such events as war affect everyone to one degree or another, but the spectrum of possible reactions and emotions is very wide. Many feel overwhelmed, thrown off track, or don't understand what's going on. People feel fear or anxiety and may fall into numbness or apathy. Some show weak reactions, and others are more severe. However, the possibilities of adaptation (psychological, physiological,

social) to such conditions sooner or later are exhausted, which contributes to the growth of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The intense feelings of anxiety, anger, and sadness common to most people are healthy and normal responses to combat events. But some individuals may have much deeper reactions to combat that disrupt their psychological health. The way a person reacts is influenced by many factors, including the nature and severity of the experienced event; experienced traumatic events in the past; availability of external life support; physical health; the presence of mental health disorders in a person or his family (including in the past); cultural roots and traditions; age. Everyone has strengths and capabilities that help them cope with life's problems. At the same time, experience shows that people who feel that they have received good social support cope better after a crisis than those who feel that they have not received enough support. That is why it is so important to provide correct first aid in emergencies.

So, stress, and traumatic events are present in the life of every person, since the presence of stressful impulses in all spheres of human life and activity is undeniable.

*Eradicating or fighting stress is pointless.* But it is within our power to learn to adapt to it and to influence our state of mind to learn to differentiate elementary failure from disaster. *And the most important task for everyone is to turn stress into a resource for self-improvement.*

To successfully cope with stress reactions and prevent distress, it is worth studying yourself in more detail, working on yourself, and getting to know yourself. After all, each of us has our characteristics of reactions to stressors. We all differ in our sensitivity to stressors. Each of us has an individual reactivity to stress reactions. Yes, we all recover from stressful situations at different speeds and with different qualities.

The events of recent months in Ukraine and the extremely complex socio-political situation in society have shown the need for social-psychological protection and psychological assistance for both children and individual adults, as well as for entire social groups.

Preventive psychological assistance is the most effective means of preventing the negative impact of severe mental trauma on a person's mental health. The development of methodological recommendations (complex of measures) for primary and secondary prevention of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and rehabilitation of victims is one of the urgent problems of modern psychology, especially in the current realities of Ukraine. The prevalence of PTSD in the population depends on the frequency of the extraordinary events.

According to the Doctor of Science in Education, Professor Yuliia Rybinska “Prevention should be carried out when there are no particular difficulties and complications in behavior, life, and activities. This is preventive work, which is aimed at the future. Important areas of psychological prevention are the prevention of stressful and post-stressful states, prevention of excessive psychological tension in a society experiencing crisis phenomena” (Rybinska, 2018).

***The purpose of this article*** is development of a comprehensive approach to the preservation and restoration of the psychological health of an individual who suffered as a result of prolonged military operations or wars. In order to achieve the set purpose, it was necessary to solve the following tasks: to develop the theoretical and methodological foundations of technologies for restoring the psychological health of an individual; to research the technologies of social and psychological rehabilitation of combatants and internally displaced persons; determine methods of mobilizing personal resources that ensure the effectiveness of social and psychological rehabilitation. The tasks of the research are the methodological principles development for the restoration of the individual psychological health, the development of social and psychological rehabilitation technologies, and the determination of resource modes that increase the effectiveness of rehabilitation effects. The method of phenomenological analysis of individual and group counseling interventions, survey methods, in-depth and contextual interviews, and case studies were used.

### ***Scientific and methodical justification***

Psychologists-researchers who work in the field of personality health pay much attention to the forms of organization of social support for a person affected by traumatization, ways of working with PTSD, overcoming stigmatization (Crone et al., 2020; Klymchuk, 2018; Winkler et al., 2017), the role of culture in the formation of health renewal practices (Jodelet, 2017). The problem of a complex renewable impact on human health, which has participated in military conflicts, is the focus of NATO psychologists. Each country provides military and civilian professional psychological support aimed at early detection of deviations and facilitating their return to normal activities. Psychological health support groups usually consist of psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses and chaplains, between which no consensus has been reached for the distribution of spheres of influence. Psychological decompression measures, special trainings aimed at preparing citizens to return home are widespread. As the analysis of

hostilities in Afghanistan shows, the most modern preventive work involves strengthening in the military context of vitality, self-regulatory skills, independence, initiative. Important new developments include the increase in the role of the social leader, which actively influences the motivation, thinking and coping of the combatants, restoring their psychological health (Vermetten et al., 2014).

In a recently conducted systematic inspection of almost 600 sources on the well-being of people who have survived a catastrophe (and the war is certainly a long-term catastrophic event), British scientists have revealed the influence of such social and psychological factors as precatastrophic (life events, health), pericatastrophic (peritraumatic experience, safety, trauma), social (organizational support, social support in general) and post-catastrophic (impact on later life) (Brooks, Dunn, Amlot, Rubin & Greenberg, 2017). Taking these factors, and especially the pericatastrophic, most relevant in the Ukrainian realities today, will certainly contribute not only to overcoming post-traumatic stressful states, but also to improving the wellbeing of various layers of the population.

Ambiguity in the understanding of the nature of stress and traumatic events has led to differences in views on their essence, to differences in interpretations of the phenomenon of stress. The phenomenon of stress has become the object of research by many scientists. The content of the concept of stress has undergone significant changes since its appearance, which is connected with the expansion of the scope of its application and a more detailed study of various aspects of the problem.

To date, there is no exact definition of stress, and the various attempts of researchers in this matter are still fragmentary and not determined. Richard Lazarus (1998) - American psychologist, professor emeritus of the Faculty of Psychology at the University of Berkeley, California, USA) noted that different ideas about the essence of stress. There is no settled terms in this subject area. Even the definitions of stress often differ greatly. However, this situation is also characteristic of several other cardinal problems, such as adaptation, fatigue, abilities, personality, and many others. In 1972, the World Health Organization adopted the following definition: stress is a nonspecific (that is, the same to different stimuli) reaction of the body to any demand placed on it. Stress is a response to a threat, real or imagined.

Thus, according to V. Suvorova (2010), stress is "a functional state of the body that arose as a result of an external negative influence on its mental functions, nervous processes, or the activity of peripheral organs." In one of the subjects from the "higher nervous activity" course, stress is

defined as "tension that occurs when threatening or unpleasant factors appear in a life situation." In contemporary scientific literature, the expression "stress" is used in at least three meanings: First, the concept of stress can be defined as any external stimuli or events that cause tension or excitement in a person.

Nowadays, the terms "stressor" and "stress factor" are more often used in this sense. Secondly, stress can refer to a subjective reaction and in this sense, it reflects an internal mental state of tension and excitement; this state is interpreted as emotions, defensive reactions, and coping processes occurring in the person himself. Such processes can promote the development and improvement of functional systems, as well as cause mental tension. Thirdly, stress can be a physical reaction of the body to demand or harmful influence. The function of these physical (physiological) reactions is probably to support behavioral actions and mental processes to overcome this condition. To clarify the concept of stress, scientists formulated two main provisions. First, terminological confusion and contradictions in the definition of the concept of "stress" can be eliminated if, when analyzing psychological stress, one takes into account not only externally observed stressful stimuli and reactions, but also some psychological processes related to stress - for example, the evaluation process threats Secondly, the stress reaction can be understood only taking into account the protective processes generated by the threat - physiological and behavioral systems of reactions to the threat are related to the internal psychological structure of the individual, its role in the subject's desire to cope with this threat.

### **Main part of the article**

The modern reality is an inexhaustible source of trauma situations, which are understood as extreme critical events and threat situations that have a powerful and negative impact on an individual and require extraordinary efforts to overcome the consequences of this impact (Tarabrina, 2001). They can take the form of unusual circumstances or some events that expose an individual to an extreme, intense, extraordinary impact of a threat to the life or health of both himself and his loved ones and fundamentally violate the sense of security.

The difficulty of studying traumatic situations is that their number and sources are multi-dimensional. Therefore, they are defined as situations that threaten human life or may lead to serious physical injury; interconnected with the perception of physical violence against other people;

have a relation to exposure or information about exposure to harmful environmental factors (Labezna, 2004).

According to the above-mentioned statements, we may state that the war broke into our lives, causing many changes, mostly destructive and caused by various factors: direct, such as experiencing the war itself and its consequences, and indirect, such as the effects of bombings, air raids, economic effects of job loss, psychological: consequences of the transition to remote forms of work and training, the disappearance of light (blackouts), the general state of uncertainty.

All these consequences will be investigated and are already being studied, so in-depth studies are currently being conducted and the preliminary results of the study of the short-term consequences of the war are being highlighted. Thus, in most of the studies, it is noted that there is an increase in various fears, constant anxiety, feelings of frustration and boredom, loneliness, depression, PTSD, changes in lifestyle, and difficulties in adaptation, as well as the increase in the number of mental disorders in the population, the deterioration of the condition of those who already had mental disorders.

The war in Ukraine is resulting in a devastating loss of life, catastrophic injuries, and physical destruction. But the war will also take an enormous mental health toll on millions of people, resulting in what could be thought will lead to an epidemic of posttraumatic stress disorder (Robert, 2022).

**"Any stress is a way to a new you,"** say psychologists. Thus, in the problem-oriented considerations of how to survive in conditions of war and stress, the following statements can be noticed; - "...Stress, in general, is quite an interesting thing - on the one hand, quite harmful, on the other - quite helpful, if you know how to use it. ... Chronic stress and post-stress disorders... are a very common phenomenon. As they say, there are no healthy people, only the unexamined".

To solve the tasks, the scientific team of the authors used the method of phenomenological analysis of individual and group counseling interventions and survey methods (the Ukrainian version of the Posttraumatic Growth Questionnaire, developed by R. Tadeschi and L. Calhoun, adapted by M. Sh. Magomed-Eminov (2014), in-depth and contextual interview. The interpretation of the results was carried out using the procedures of content and narrative analysis and qualitative analysis of creative products.

### **Technologies for restoring the psychological health of an individual**

Based on the study results, it was determined that the long-term military trauma consequences should be analyzed in the full range: from negative (PTSD, decrease in the level of the individual psychological health) to positive (post-traumatic growth, life creation activation). Negative consequences are manifested at the socio-psychological level as a decrease in the tendency to cooperate, the ability to empathize, and a drop in trust in the world; at the value-semantic level as a loss of the ability to find new life perspectives, difficulties in making sense of experience, a decrease in the ability to get pleasure from everyday life; at the individual psychological level as an experience of splitting, violation of integrity, destructive changes of identity, weakening of the need for self-realization, balance reduction, adaptability.

Accordingly, the main condition for maintaining psychological health is the individual's readiness to creatively construct life. The means of restoring psychological health should be social-psychological rehabilitation as a complex process of revitalizing life and increasing subjective well-being. The individual's ability to manage life is based on the readiness restoration for self-transformation and the implementation of updated projects of the future in the family, personal, and professional spheres. Rehabilitation involves the variability of interventions, taking into account the individual life history, his resources and the nature of the injury, the possibility of restoring partially lost functions, and preventing complications.

The key (integrity, self-realization, self-regulation) and auxiliary **indicators of the psychological health of the individual** are empirically established. Auxiliary indicators should be considered at three levels: individual-psychological (creativity, balance, adaptability), value-semantic (search for new meanings, comprehension of experience, ability to enjoy life), and socio-psychological (propensity to cooperate, ability to empathize, responsibility to society).

The criteria for restoring psychological health are the available opportunities of the subjects: to achieve a higher level of personal integrity and continuity, self-belief, self-support, and self-help ability; increase self-efficacy; strengthen the need-motivational, value-meaningful resources of the individual as a source of self-change; restore constructive relations with the environment.

The following were identified as **the most effective practices to promote post-traumatic growth**: development of the ability to positively reinterpret life's trials, treat the experience as a resource; testing new, more

effective ways of interacting with the environment, reformatting likes and dislikes; restoration of the ability to search for the meaning of one's being, to create meaning; deepening responsibility for everything that happens, changing attitudes to the causes and consequences of certain events in life; increased readiness for change, constant self-study, more constructive attitude to one's own mistakes.

Recovery of the individual at the socio-psychological level involves exploring the possibilities of communities (professional, territorial, environmental, political, etc.) as a key element of the social structure. The conditions of targeted involvement in communities are activation of their activities, strengthening of readiness to provide support to their members, and deepening of ties with other communities. Predictors of targeted involvement of a person in community life are his/her psychological readiness to receive support from certain communities; stimulation of motivation to individual contribution to the life of communities; increasing individual responsibility for the activities of communities, and their collective self-determination.

Today, scientists, psychologists, and psychotherapists are working on the development of diagnostic tools for measuring personal transformations after trauma (especially related to military actions), practical recommendations for its use; ways and methods of psychotherapeutic assistance to people who have survived the events of the war, when the emphasis is on the growth of the individual, and not only on alleviating the symptoms of suffering.

In this context, in our opinion, the narrative-oriented approach to growth facilitation offered by S. Joseph is especially valuable. The scientist gives the following recommendations for facilitating post-traumatic growth and overcoming difficulties along the way: to make sure that the client is safe and to help him learn to cope with post-traumatic stress; learn to have hope for the future, for example, through inspiring stories of people who have been through similar situations; rewrite their experience by creating stories using expressive writing techniques; notice post-traumatic growth (using scales and questionnaires); develop confidence in new priorities; actively seek ways to implement these changes in the outside world (Joseph, 2013).

As for the practical part of the study, the following methodology was used in our empirical research:

1. Ukrainian version of the "Posttraumatic Growth Questionnaire" developed by R. Tadeschi and L. Calhoun (2004), adapted by M. S. Magomed-Eminov. The questionnaire contains 21 statements with six possible answers. The statements are combined into five scales: attitude

towards others, new opportunities, personal strength, spiritual changes, and increasing the value of life, as well as the overall index of post-traumatic growth.

The methodology involved the reflection of the respondents on their own experience of the beginning of the war as a traumatic factor and focusing their attention on rethinking the overall picture of the world caused by these circumstances. We chose this methodology because the content of the questions contributed to the ability of participants to notice the manifestations of their post-traumatic growth.

2 An online questionnaire (Google Forms). The questionnaire contains information part concerning the general assessment of changes in people's condition since the beginning of the war.

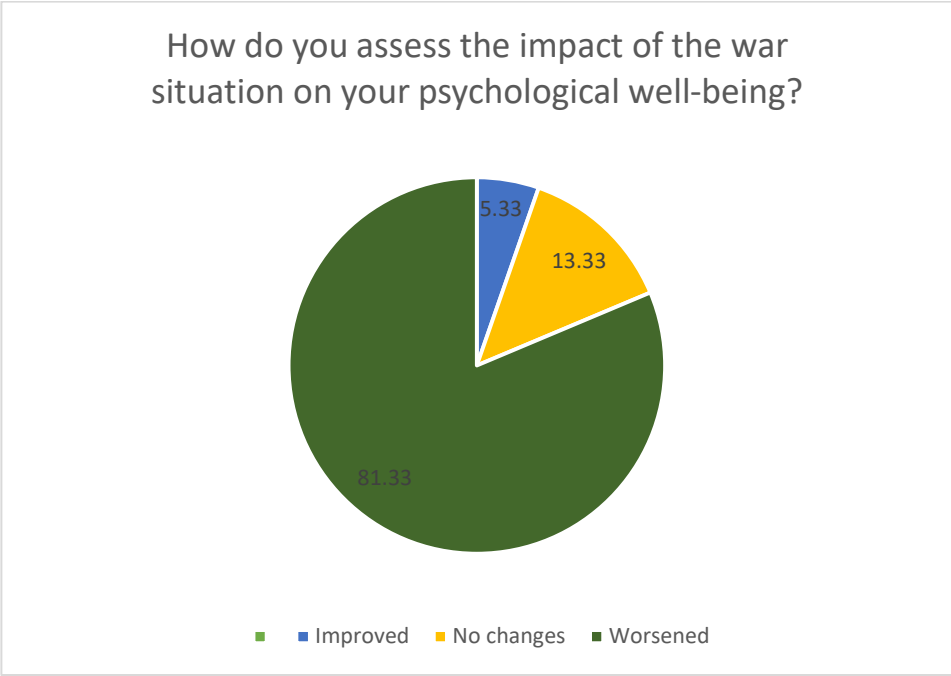
First of all, we would like to note that the data collection started in April 2022 and continues to this day in the format of filling out an online questionnaire (Google Forms). The target audience of the survey included 150 students and employees of Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts (age -17-60 years). All the study participants continued their studies/work at the university (distance form) and were not directly involved in military operations. We were interested in this particular age and social category because the transformation of values of young and middle-aged people, caused by the traumatic events of the beginning of the war, has been little studied and is of particular interest. The first part of the questionnaire contains the information part: age, gender, the experience of combat operations (direct/indirect), and general assessment of changes in their condition since the beginning of the war. The interim data collected as of 25 November 2022 was downloaded and subjected to analysis (quantitative and qualitative).

### ***Sample characteristics***

The average age of the study participants is 25 years, with a minimum age of 17 years and a maximum age of 60 years. Gender: 102 women (68%) and 48 men (32%). The total sample size is 150 people.

### ***Comparison of self-assessment indicators of changes in the psychological well-being of survey participants***

Overall, only 5.33% of the sample reported that their psychological well-being has improved (8 people). No changes were noticed by 13.33% (20 people). The state of psychological well-being, according to the self-assessment of the study participants, worsened in 81.33% (122 people).



As for post-traumatic growth, we will first analyze the results of the survey of respondents using the post-traumatic growth questionnaire. The vast majority of respondents reported certain positive changes that occurred to them after comprehending the traumatic events of the beginning of the war (see Table 1). Thus, 24.6% of survey participants declared a high level of post-traumatic growth, 53.7% - medium, 21.7% - low.

A more detailed analysis of the ratio of the number of participants with high rates of post-traumatic growth on different scales of the methodology, allowed to state the following. The largest number of respondents showed high rates of post-traumatic growth (33.1%) on the scale "Increasing the value of life" (average of 46.2% of respondents), which is evidence of a change in their life priorities towards the desire to make each day more meaningful, they began to appreciate the present more. It should be noted that usually young people are more focused on the future, and the situation of the outbreak of war has accelerated their understanding of the importance of the present moment.

***The ratio of manifestation levels of different post-traumatic growth dimensions in the study participants (in %)***

| <b><i>Growth dimensions</i></b> | <b><i>Manifestation levels</i></b> |        |      |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------|------|
|                                 | Low                                | Medium | High |
| Attitude towards others         | 13,6                               | 59,1   | 27,3 |
| New opportunities               | 35,3                               | 33,8   | 30,9 |
| Personality strength            | 17,2                               | 69     | 13,8 |
| Spiritual changes               | 62                                 | 22     | 16   |
| Increasing the value of life    | 20,7                               | 46,2   | 33,1 |
| Post-traumatic growth index     | 21,7                               | 53,7   | 24,6 |

Interesting results were obtained on the scale "New opportunities": a significant number of participants (low rate was found in 35,3% of respondents) lost faith in the future, and their own ability to positively influence their life, but 30.9% of students have new interests, they have become more confident in their own ability to change what can be changed and to take for granted what cannot be changed in any way.

It can be assumed that such ambiguous results on the scale "New Opportunities" are due to the variability of our respondents' solutions to the age crisis of identity, which leads to doubts about themselves, their own abilities, and their vision of their place in society. After all, the main percentage of the survey participants is the category from 17 to 25 years old. In this age period of psychosocial moratorium, when society provides young people with the opportunity to freely find their place in society and a delay for the final choice, the outbreak of war accelerates this process and requires a quick decision. However, on the one hand, the choice is complicated by uncertainty, collapse of plans, lack of vision of prospects, and on the other hand, conditions are created for practical testing of oneself, one's strength in a situation of uncertainty and rapid changes caused by the outbreak of war.

This is confirmed by the results obtained on other scales. Thus, the smallest number of participants with a low level of manifestation of post-traumatic growth is observed on the scales "Personality Strength" and "Attitude towards others" (respectively: 13.6% and 17.2% of students). Hence, the highest percentage of respondents with an average level of

manifestation is observed on the scale "Strength of personality" (69%), which, together with a high rate (16%), constitutes the vast majority of students who better realized that they can overcome life's adversities and found out that it is much stronger than it was thought before

The lowest intensity of post-traumatic growth is observed on the scale of "Spiritual changes" (62% - low indicators; 22% - average). Only 13.8% of respondents began to better understand spiritual issues and became more religious.

The context of war, as the cause and content of trauma and post-traumatic stress for some, is an absolutely emasculating factor and determinant of complete loneliness, and for others, it is the embodiment of the phenomenon "we and war". "We" are common problems, more or less the same conditions, comprehensible difficulties, etc.

And in order not to become victims of this war, you just need to turn off the TV and read less news". The desire to be up to date with the news is completely understandable, but according to the psychologist "... for this it is enough to simply look at the news feed of your favorite, and most importantly - verified edition, and be up to date with events. ... It is also worth carefully choosing those with whom you discuss events that happening around you. You need to talk about it with those who are calm about troubles in their lives and do not like to incite panic. If there are "tantrums" in your environment, try to avoid talking to them. The same should be done with alarmists in social networks...". The following statement of this coordinator seems to be quite correct: "... You have never been president or minister, so you can't say exactly what the actions of those who currently rule the country should be... war is not a computer game where you can press a button and fix the situation, but a real problem in which everyone must think ahead",

So is it possible to live without stress and traumatic events? Science says: it is not possible. Life is a constant source of change. It does not tolerate constancy and stability. Life itself is the main source of stress and problems. All serious events in our lives cause stress. Scientists consider the birth of a person to be the greatest stress. Everything that surrounds us can cause stress. These are health problems, problems at work or home, political changes, problems raising children, property waste, trips, jealousy, bad sleep, lack of money, etc. But for Ukrainian people the main day-to-day source of stress is war. War exhausts our nervous system, worsens life, and limits our possibilities.

## Conclusions

The mental health of the nation is currently a fairly well-established scientific thesis, but its support and development requires further multi-vector study and scientific and psychological understanding. There is a problem of mental health of the individual in the plane of interdisciplinary research, which is the basis the application of a complex methodology, an in-depth study of the integration links of the theoretical should be assigned and applied psychology, as well as other scientific fields knowledge. Before us is the task of complex restoration of psychosomatic and psychosocial health of the population of Ukraine, where the most difficult and long-lasting stage is rehabilitation.

The bold and unexpected military aggression, accompanied by violation of the country's integrity, political and economic disasters, numerous losses (of loved ones, homes, the ability to live and work as usual), causes confusion, depression, various stress disorders in large numbers of people. Not only combatants, members of their families, prisoners of war, the wounded, but also those who permanently reside in the combat zone or in the frontline areas, as well as internally displaced persons suffer and react to the military confrontation with serious deepening of maladjustment. Many people who are physically far from the front are still fully involved in the terrible events psychologically and perceive the environment as extremely dangerous. It is very difficult to adapt to the numerous stress factors of war, and asthenization, sensitization, apathy, decreased ability to work, difficulties with communication, decreased quality of life are spreading and growing. There is also induction, contamination with fears, bad premonitions, fake news, negative predictions through personal contacts, media and social networks.

The events of the first months of the war led to violations of the physical, social, personal and spiritual balance of the residents of Ukraine, caused many emotional disorders, traumatic events and negative experiences. War is an extreme situation, that is, one that goes beyond ordinary, "normal human experience." For certain groups of Ukrainians, this situation is hyper-extreme: the internal stress it causes often exceeds human capabilities, destroys habitual behavior and actions, and can cause dangerous consequences. Hyperextreme can be considered the unexpected loss of a loved one, captivity, torture, violence (especially if there is a threat to life or integrity), presence at the time of death or injury, etc.

The stress of war is different from everyday stress because, for the most part, it exceeds our ability to adapt and change. War is a long and tense

process. As a stressor that cannot be eliminated in a short time, it continues to affect us physically, morally, psychologically and mentally. In this situation, we can talk about chronic stress, which in the long term causes resistance (insensitivity) of a certain type of receptors. At the same time, the level of stress mediators remains high, which leads to multiple injuries of organs and tissues.

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